Today's session will discuss choosing and installing the right theme for you. Here are the learning objectives for this workshop. To differentiate between the four different types of themes, to find and evaluate themes, to install and update your theme, and lastly, to access support for your theme. Let's get going.

What is a theme?

In short, a theme is basically a website template with a certain layout and design. When you use WordPress, your content is completely separated from its presentation. This means that the look and feel of your site can change completely by just using a different theme, while your content will remain the same.

Let's look at an example. Here, I am using the Twenty Twent-Three default theme. In the next example, I have installed and activated the Bounce theme, which has a very different look and feel to it. But the content remains the same. It is also important to highlight that your site won't look the same as the thumbnail or example pages of the theme you install and activate. It is merely an example of what can be achieved and sometimes requires the installation of specific plugins to achieve the initial appearance. There are thousands of free themes available in WordPress, but premium themes are available outside of the theme repository. But please take note that many free versions also offer premium packages.

Types of themes

You might be asking, what type of themes are there? There are four types of themes to take note of. Block themes, classic themes, hybrid themes, and universal themes. It might be helpful to mention that block themes and classic themes are most commonly used and that block themes are the future of WordPress.

Block themes

Let's then start by looking at block themes. A block theme uses blocks for all parts of the site, including navigation menus, headers, content, and footers. Block themes allow you to edit and customize all parts of your site within the Site Editor. Let's see a block theme in action. I will make my way to Appearance and click on Themes. I have activated a block-based theme called Twenty Twenty-Three, and in the left sidebar, you will notice we have access to the Editor. If we click on Editor, we will be taken to the Site Editor, and here, you are able to create and edit pages. You can create a draft page or edit one of your existing pages. Next, we can also change the site-wide styles of our site, or we can customize the appearance of specific blocks for the whole site.

The Site Editor also allows you to set up templates. You can add new templates or edit the templates that come with your theme. Lastly, you can also manage a variety of patterns, patterns that you have created yourself, or header and footer template patterns that we, of course, add to templates. I realize that some folks might be unfamiliar with terms like styles, templates, etc. So please check out the resources below this video to learn more.

A wonderful new feature also allows you to preview a block theme before switching. When you hover over the block theme, you will see a button for live preview. You will be taken to the Site Editor when you click Live Preview. So not only are you able to preview the site, but you also get a taste of the Site Editor. And now you can go ahead and make any changes or customizations as you please. I will, for example, change the style variation and also change the font of the text. Now, we can explore our pages, our templates, etc. If you like what you see, you even have the option to activate and save the theme and the changes you have made.

Classic themes

A classic theme does not use the block editor to manage the site layout beyond posts and pages. These use the Customizer, menus, and widgets to make changes to theme settings. Since classic themes have been around the longest, there are many more to choose from. Let's take a closer look at an example of a classic theme. When we make our way to Appearance and click on Themes, you will notice I have activated the Twenty Sixteen theme. You will have access to the Customizer and more in the sidebar settings. When you open the Customizer, you will be able to change all your theme settings from here. And note, block themes, on the other hand, provide greater flexibility for designing and customizing your website.

Hybrid themes

A hybrid theme is a classic theme that adopts some features of site editing, like the Template Editor. A hybrid theme such as Eksell still uses the Customizer to make changes while also being able to create your own custom templates. So let's make our way to pages, open one of your pages, and go to the sidebar settings on the right. Click on Templates, and you will be able to assign a page to a different template or create a custom template.

Universal themes

And lastly, a universal theme is a theme that can be configured completely either way, as a block theme or classic theme. In this example, I have installed the universal theme Emulsion, and as you will notice, you have access to the Customizer as well as the Editor.

Searching and adding a new theme

Next, let's talk about searching and adding a new theme. To add a new theme, go to Appearance and click on Themes. At the top, click on Add New. You can search for the most popular themes, the latest ones that have been added, and a designated area for block themes. When you click on a theme, you will be able to see more details about the theme as well as a preview. When you click on the Feature filter, you will be able to search for themes according to subject, features, and layout.

Reviewing a theme

What makes a good theme? To review a theme, make your way to WordPress.org, hover over Download and Extend, and then click on Themes. Here, you can search for a variety of themes.

Once you find the theme you are looking for, click More info to learn more about the specific theme. You will find all the information you need to make an informed decision on the right-hand side. When you look at the version updates, active installations, and ratings, it will give you a good sense of the overall experience others have had with this theme.

Installing a theme

How do I install a theme? To install a new theme, make your way to Appearance, click on Themes, and select Add New. Once you find the theme you are looking for, click on Install. And once installed, don't forget to click on Activate.

If you have a theme in the form of a zip file, you can install it manually. Click on Add new, and then at the top, select Upload theme. Then, you can upload it from your computer.

Updating a theme

What about updates? If updates are available, you will be notified in the top menu bar and the dashboard menu. You can navigate to the updates page and scroll down. Here, you will find a single theme or a list of available updates. From this page, you can choose to update individual themes or all at once. Remember to back up your site before making any updates, or you can consider using a child theme.

A child theme is a sub-theme that inherits the look and feel of the main theme and all of its functions. Using a child theme lets you upgrade the parent theme without affecting the customizations you have made to your site. Customizations are kept separate from the main theme's files. But I will add a link to this in the resources below. Another option is to go to Appearance, click on Themes, and go to the theme that needs updating. At the top, you will have the option to select Update now. Or click on Theme details, and at the top, you can also update. Lastly, you also have the option to enable auto-updates for this specific theme.

Deleting a theme

How do I delete a theme? To delete a theme, select the relevant theme; at the bottom right, you can delete it.

Getting support

And lastly, how do I get support? To get support, make your way to the theme directory, select the relevant theme, and scroll down to support. The best way to get help with a theme is by going to the theme's related support forum to ask questions or view other tickets. I trust you will find the right theme that meets all your needs.

Resources

[Block themes](#)

[Site Editor](#)

[Template Editor](#)

[Styles Overview](#)